

The Broadside



The voice of The Mathews Maritime Foundation

Museum Located at 482 Main Street, Mathews, VA Mail to PO Box 1201, Mathews, VA 23109 804-725-4444

on the web at www.mathewsmaritime.com

'Tis the Season...

For this the December issue of our newsletter I thought it appropriate to present a review of the Foundation's activities of this our 12th anniversary year. Before doing so I'd like to express our sincere thanks and gratitude to those organizations and individuals who gave of their time and talent to help us continue to provide interesting and educational programs to the Mathews community.

The Year in Review...

Edward Diggs Honored...

A highlight of the year for the Foundation was a surprise reception that took place at the Mathews Maritime Museum on October 16 at which over one hundred people honored Edward Diggs, builder of boats large and small. While the event was disguised as an "Open House" so his wife Louise could get him out on a lovely day, the display of so many of his models in one place was a sight to behold... and a surprise for Edward.

Henry Schlenk, who has worked alongside Edward building and repairing boats, suggested the idea of bringing the models together. Louise and son Andy helped form the plot and the enthusiastic and willing owners rounded out the plan for what, I believe, was a total surprise for Edward!

As the fortunate owners brought their boats to the museum, they delighted in looking

at all of the others - totally aware that they had special boats built by a special man. Edward's talent and skill in building large boats (alone or with others) is well known locally. Each scale model of the original represents many hours of craftsmanship and the high level of perfection that Edward demands of himself.

We are grateful for and wish to thank the following for bringing their models to the museum: Martha Ann Ashberry, Sandy and James Diggs, Andy and Kim Diggs, Richard and Lloy-dette Diggs, James and Mary Diggs, Vera and John England, Peggy and Bunny Foster, Linda and Pat Griffin, Glenna and Lowry Hudgins, Margaret and Tommy Owens, Judy and Norris Richardson, Henry Schlenk, Barbara and Carroll Smith, and Kelly and David Smith.

While the models took center stage in the large rooms of the museum, the many exhibits or artifacts, photos, models and other memorabilia provided the perfect setting. It also provided the opportunity to invite everyone to the museum, many for their first visit.

Edward Diggs is a Mathews County treasure, a man of humility, grace and dignity as well as a master boat builder. It was an honor for the Foundation to host this special gathering of his models and we thank all who attended.

Youth Activities...

We continued to provide educational opportunities to Mathews County children through our annual Chesapeake Bay Days, and model

Keeping the Past in the Present Preserving it for the Future

boat building. All of these events were well attended. Eighty-six Thomas Hunter Middle school sixth graders attended Chesapeake Bay Days and were exposed to various displays and demonstrations pertaining to maritime history and preservation of the Chesapeake Bay. Model boat building attracted thirteen youngsters each of whom had the opportunity to build a model of a Chesapeake Bay rowing skiff.

Maritime Heritage Trail...

Work on the East River portion, phase one, of the Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail is now complete. Janet Loyd, program coordinator, and her crew of volunteers (Marcy Benouameur, Dave Machen, Dave Montgomery, VIMS, and National Park Service's Rivers and Trails division) are to be congratulated on a job well done.

The East River segment follows the 90-mile Blueway Water Trail, which is part of the Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network. Connecting with the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail, the water trail follows the coastline of Mathews County. Along the trail maritime sites of wharves, oyster, fish, and crab packing houses, 2 lighthouses, historic shipyards, marinas, ferry crossings, tide mills, plantations, and Revolutionary and Civil War battle sites are being identified, documented, interpreted and photographed. To view the East River segment go to www.mathewsmaritime.com and click on "East River Guide".

This extensive downloadable and printable website, created by the partnership with the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, lists tips on trip planning for small watercraft and kayaks, boating safety, public boat access, distances, water conditions to be considered and a rating of the skill level suggested, and environmental viewing tips.

Historic maritime sites are also listed with pictures of former structures compared to current sites for a "then and now" record. A DVD highlighting the East River segment of the Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail is in production. Committee members Marcy Benouameur, Grace Forrest, Dave Machen, Dave Montgomery, and Janet Loyd are currently researching the

Gwynn's Island/Milford Haven section of the trail.

Foundation Cited for work on MMHT...

The Mathews Maritime Foundation was recently presented with the prestigious Albert B. Corey Award from the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) at their annual conference in Richmond, VA. The Albert B. Corey Award is named in honor of a founder and former president of AASLH and recognizes primarily volunteer-operated organizations that best display the qualities of vigor, scholarship, and imagination in their work.

The Corey Award is given by the Leadership in History Awards committee at their discretion and includes a cash award of \$500. The AASLH Leadership in History Awards, now in its 66th year, is the most prestigious recognition for achievement in the preservation and interpretation of state and local history.



Dave Montgomery, Janet Loyd, Dave Machen & Marcy Benouameur at AASLH Annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia

This award recognizes Mathews Maritime Foundation's special project: "Mathews Maritime Heritage Trail". An ecological/archeological water trail and land route, the maritime trail will preserve the historical, cultural, and environmental sites which shaped the maritime history and nautical heritage of Mathews County, the Tidewater region of Virginia and the Chesapeake Bay and will generate educational opportunities

while developing appreciation for the area's natural and historic resources.

"The Leadership in History Awards is the American Association for State and Local History's highest distinction and the winners represent the best in the field," said Terry Davis, AASLH President & CEO. This year, we are pleased to distinguish each recipient's commitment and innovation to the interpretation of history."

Museum Renovated & Growing...

The building that now houses the Mathews Maritime Museum has been many things over the years, but to meet the needs of a museum many changes and repairs had to be done. The leaky roof was replaced, and then attention shifted to the labyrinth interior full of dark rooms. Three offices, two bathrooms, and a hallway were removed which opened up the current main room that now serves as a display area, or a gathering place for our speaker's meetings. Also, the complete renovation of the bathroom was done, including replacing floor joists and all plumbing, to create a sound structure that can now accommodate handicapped individuals.



Museum at start of renovations Photo by Dave Machen

With the original sagging wood floor repaired and refinished, valances and curtains added, and displays rearranged, the renovated Museum is now ready to display the maritime heritage of Mathews County, as well as host special events for the community. One such event was a sur-

prise celebration on Oct. 16th for Ed Diggs and his skills as a shipbuilder and model maker. Many of his meticulous work boat models were brought in for display by their proud owners, and so many people attended the event that many had to sit outside under the tents. (*See article on Diggs elsewhere in this issue*)



Museum after renovation Photo by Dave Machen

The Museum's collection of maritime artifacts has grown to about 1,400 items, most of which were donated. Others have been loaned to us for display. Such as Civil War cannonballs found at Woodas Creek on loan from the family of Lisa White, and a painting of Capt. John Lewis' WW II ship, painted while he was at the invasion of Normandy, on loan from Bob Lewis.

The waterman's way of life is represented by photos, model boats, and work items such as seine needles and oyster tongs, to help us understand that way of life and the hard work in harvesting the bounty of the Bay.

Photos of the steamboat era, remembered with fondness by the older citizens of Mathews, highlight this vital connection to the outside world before autos and trucks.

The Museum displays also remind us of the service given by Mathews residents who have worked on the water for centuries, serving in large numbers in the Coast guard, Merchant Marine, Commercial fisheries & tugs, and the Navy. Each item in the displays tells a story and

brings us closer to the actual events and people. Sextants, photos, and 100 year old foul weather gear; Admiral Wright's navigation tools from the *USS Augusta* when FDR met secretly with Winston Churchill at the Atlantic Conference; and Admiral Tyree's career spanning from the 1930's to his Antarctic experiences. From the Civil War events at Fitchett's Wharf when the Union forces sought to find Capt. Lewis Hudgins and destroy his boatyard, to the photos of the turn-around basin that used to be in the heart of Mathews Court House. Hand tools used to build ocean going ships, and a lending library, are all there for today's visitor to experience the Mathews Maritime Heritage.

The Museum is located at 482 Main St., Mathews Court House, VA., and open from May through November, Fridays and Saturdays, 10 AM to 2 PM, if volunteers are available. The Museum can be opened for a tour or special event if arranged in advance. Call the Museum at 804-725-4444 or Dennis Crawford at 804-725-9088 or Marcy Benouameur at 804-725-5668.

Article by Dennis Crawford, Curator

MMF/RCC Partnership...

The partnership we entered into with Rappahannock Community College is going well for both of us. The main reason for this partnership is to give RCC's Workforce Development Group a venue for conducting its marine trades education courses. This past year classes were held in the Spring and Fall. They covered gasoline engine maintenance and repair, advanced diesel engine maintenance and repair, basic marina skills, and boat hull restoration (preparation for and spray paint application). For information regarding class topics and schedules contact Jason Perry, Vice President of Workforce Development Rappahannock Community College at 804-758-6751.

Heritage Day Celebration...

This year we ventured into a new format for our sixth annual Mathews Maritime Heritage celebration. Instead of utilizing a single venue, visitors were routed to seven maritime locations in the County. Starting at Morningstar's Gwynn's Island Boatel visitors enjoyed music by

"Juniper Green", saw wooden boats built during Family Boatbuilding events, inspected two workboats at the dock, and talked with members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Tidewater Oyster Growers Association and 4-H.

From the Boatel visitors were directed to our Gwynn's Island Boat Shop where our historic buy boat, "Peggy of New Point" is undergoing restoration and where Eric Hedberg is building reproductions of traditional Bay work boats. Callis' Wharf was their next stop. There they could observe an aquaculture operation and the vestiges of an old seafood business. Fourth on the tour was Island Seafood where one could choose from a variety of seafood for sale and receive a package of Deviled crabs free with the purchase of any seafood.

Number five on the tour was Gwynn's Island Museum with exhibits dedicated to preserving the history of Gwynn's Island and Mathews County. From there visitors headed into Mathews courthouse to take in the Maritime Museum and Tompkins Cottage. At the Museum they could view artifacts and photographs depicting the shipbuilding history of the County. Circa 1815, Tompkins Cottage is the headquarters of the Mathews Historical Society and the oldest building in the historic district.

A little rain put a damper on some of the activities, but all in all we had a great day. Morningstar was a great host. They even provided fresh caught oysters on the grill to all in attendance.

Our sincere thanks to the Foundation members and volunteers who helped to make this day a success. Dave Machen and Richard Browder held forth at the Boatel, Dennis Crawford manned the museum, Marcy Benouameur and Kerry Hall gave tours at our Gwynn's Island Boat Shop, and Jack Caldwell welcomed visitors at Tompkins Cottage. Well done all!!

2012 Maritime Calendar...

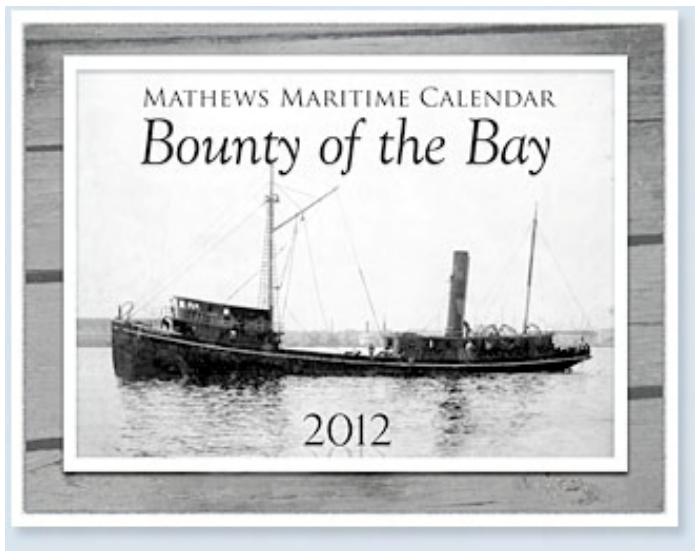
Once again Nancy Lindgren, Editor and Grace Metzger Forrest, graphic design artist have produced a calendar, our seventh edition, of which to be proud. This year's theme, "Bounty of the Bay" is intended to honor those men who

love working on the water; a difficult job that demands dedication, hard work, a good boat, “reading the water”, knowing the weather, and faith that the source will always be present.

The calendar, first published in 2006, began primarily as a fundraiser but as Nancy says, “It has become more a source of nostalgia, information and anticipation of each year’s debut during Market Days. I’ve been fortunate to meet people who share their photos and the stories they represent, and hope that when you uncover photos that are interesting or unique you’ll provide us with copies.”

We are grateful to the those individuals who contributed the photographs for this edition and to Elsa Cook Verbyla for writing the photo captions.

If you haven’t yet purchased one of these calendars they are available for \$10.00 each at Vicky’s Beauty Shop in Cobbs Creek, M&M Building Supply in Port Haywood, the Mathews Visitors & Information Center, and The Cottage (Roane’s Antiques) in the Courthouse.



Donor Boat Program...

The donor boat program continues to provide funds to the Foundation to support our many programs. Since its inception on 2004 we have taken in 93 boats of various types and sizes. As of this writing 72 have been sold generating \$ 95,385. for the Foundation. In this year alone, 15 boats were donated and 10 sold bringing in \$16,450. Our sincere thanks to all donors

as well as purchasers. We are grateful for your support.

All donor boats for sale are listed on our web site <www.mathewsmaritime.com> for anyone looking to buy a boat. Contact Pete Hall at 804-693-9335 for additional information or to see the boats close up. All are located at our Gwynn’s Island Boat Shop.

Speaker Meetings...

Our third Thursday of the month from September through May speaker meetings continue to be well attended. Some of our speakers and their topics presented this year include: Richard Edson with a two part lecture on Herreshoff boatbuilders of Bristol, and on Lunenburg, Nova Scotia; Ed Bottoms on the Indians of Prehistoric Mathews”; Marcy Benouameur on her father’s voyage to Inagua; Michael Moore on the “Confederate Coast Guard”; Bob George on “Sea Turtles of the Chesapeake, Ancient Mariners and Fearless Navigators”; Paul Stimson on “the ideal boat”; and Jim Brown on “Multihulls of the World”.

All were excellent speakers with interesting topics. Our thanks to our speakers and to all who attended these lectures.

4-H/MMF Boat Building project...

This has been one of our most ambitious undertakings. The idea for this project was conceived in January of 2010 when we learned that the Jamestown 4-H Center was planning to establish a sailing program as part of their camp offerings and was looking for a fleet of suitable sailboats. As we had some boat kits left over from our Family Boat Building event, we decided to partner with Nancy Roche, the Mathews Cooperative Extension Agent, to contact individuals, marinas, yacht clubs and the like to solicit “adoptions” to fund a fleet of six boats. The boat, a 10’ William Atkin design called the “Nymph” is a flat bottom hard chine boat quite suitable for kids learning to sail.

By September we had raised enough through individual donations and through sailboat “adoptions” to fund three boats. The Pankatank Ruritan Club and the Mathews Yacht Club adopted a boat each; and contributions

from individuals, marinas, and others were sufficient to fund a boat.

Beginning in the Fall of 2010 and continuing through the Spring of this year with the help of many volunteers the three boats were built and delivered to the Jamestown 4-H Center in June.



The dedication ceremony for the 4H boats at the Jamestown 4-H Center was held the afternoon of June 29, 2011. Pictured are, from left, Pete Hall MMF Treasurer, Tony Lea Director Jamestown 4-H Center, and Nancy Roche Mathews Extension Agent.

On hand for the boat building were several members of the Mathews Yacht Club, six 4-H youth, and Extension Agent Nancy Roche. Professional boat builders Joe Ortiz and Tim Scheid along with Pete Hall and Dennis Crawford were on hand to guide the building of the boats.

In July funding for two more boats was received from The J. Edwin Treakle Foundation and Dr. Timothy Catchings. Construction of these two boats will begin in January 2012 with delivery of completed boats scheduled for June.

This project highlights so many positives: youth and adults working together toward a common goal; volunteers creating opportunity for valuable educational programming for youth; small donations adding up to making a big difference; collaboration among organizations; benefits to youth beyond the classroom such as teamwork, problem solving, decision making, skill development, generosity and community

service, quality control, and pride in work. Youth who build these boats will see their work and will be able to witness how their work is benefiting others when they attend camp. They will have an opportunity to leave a legacy.

Fifth Annual Chesapeake Bay Day...

Crabs, oysters, caulking mallets, swords and steamboats. What do they all have in common? Chesapeake Bay Day! Eighty-five sixth grade students celebrated the annual event with a day full of anticipation and maritime heritage.

Sponsored by the Mathews Maritime Foundation, Chesapeake Bay Day is a day when students at Thomas Hunter Middle School learn about the Bay and maritime activities from the past to the present. Visiting 9 different stations, the young people were taught how to tie knots and identify crabs. Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District representatives demonstrated how yard runoff pollutes the water and the Tidewater Oyster Gardeners Association explained how oysters clean the water.

The Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 66 informed the kids on boating safety and in the proper way to don a PFD, personal flotation device. "Shipbuilding Tools and Traditions" allowed students to caulk a seam using a caulking mallet and iron, cut lumber with a 2 person cross cut saw, and plane a board. County planners stressed the RPA and the need to protect the Bay; members of the Sesquicentennial Committee shared Mathews' importance in the "Water and the War" and the Archaeological Society of VA, Middle Peninsula Chapter exhibited artifacts discovered on Mathews' shores.

Costumed interpreters from the VA Cooperative Extension 4-H and MMF presented a vignette of "Steamboat Days". Weaving a story of travel by steamboat from Norfolk and Baltimore to Mathews in the early 20th century, the students learned about the cargo transported between the wharves and the hazards of such travel.

The Maritime Educational Consortium explained how the early European settlers saw the New World through the eyes and writings of Captain John Smith's "tourist journal". New

this year was the Oyster Tonging station. Climbing to the top of a platform, the students tried to catch oyster shells using long handled tongs and then transfer them to a basket.

“The “Chesapeake Bay Day” is an opportunity for young people to experience the past and develop an appreciation of the maritime heritage of Mathews County”, said Janet Loyd, coordinator of this annual event. “The preservation of the Chesapeake Bay is also paramount in the instruction, as the students will inherit the next generation of the Bay’s environment. We are appreciative to all the organizations, which participated and have a similar interest in preserving the maritime history of this area. We also thank THMS principal, Mr. Comer, 6th grade teacher Leslie Hudgins and other teachers for their support and assistance.” *Article by Janet Loyd, Program Coordinator*

Model Boat Building...

Boat building and Mathews County are synonymous, and there are some new boat builders that might just revive the construction of wooden boats. Members of the Mathews Maritime Foundation, the Boys’ and Girls’ Club, the Mathews County 4-H Clubs and Thomas Hunter Middle School joined together in 2008 to implement the first in a series of model boat building classes for middle school students. Through the model boat building program young people are informed of the past maritime history of the county as well as experience traditional stick boat construction methods.

Since its inception eighty students have participated in this popular after school activity. One student was asked why she named her boat after her grandfather when it is tradition to give a boat the name of a female. She said, “My grandfather was a waterman and I did it to honor him”.

We have Dave Montgomery to thanks for his dedication and hard work in producing the boat kits for this activity. He cuts all of the kit pieces and parts in his home shop and then shows the kids how to put them all together.

Peggy of New Point Restoration...

PEGGY of New Point is one of the few surviving deck boats to have been built in Mathews County. She was constructed in 1925 as an open trap boat by Harry A. Hudgins in the Peary area of the county. PEGGY was named for the daughter of her first owner Mr. Walter Burroughs, who conducted a successful pound net fishery.

During the 87th year of her life, PEGGY of New Point has been undergoing a substantial overhaul. Her pilothouse has been removed and taken to the Foundation’s boat shop at Gwynn’s Island, where restoration work is being performed indoors. Those who may be interested in volunteering their services to assist with this project are invited to contact George Pongonis for further information at: (757) 898-4364.

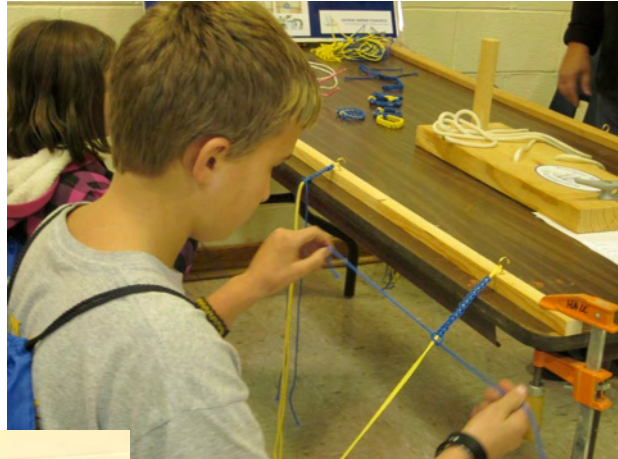
Following the removal of PEGGY’s pilothouse, her decks were carefully measured and documented, and then deconstructed. All that remained was her bare hull with its propulsion machinery. A shipment of select grade fir was received from a lumber mill in the state of Washington for use in constructing the necessary support for PEGGY’s new deck. The next step will involve the construction of cabin trunks and deck hatches to allow access to her forepeak and mid-section. Finally, new deck planking will be laid down then followed by trim work, finish painting and lastly, the resetting of PEGGY’s freshly restored pilothouse.

These restoration activities should be completed next June. A reception for PEGGY’s mid-life overhaul shall be held at the Gwynn’s Island Boat Shop when she is ready to be reintroduced to her public. However, a far greater celebration shall be in the planning twelve years from now, to honor of the 100th birthday of PEGGY of New Point, as she remains a living legacy within the Mathews maritime heritage.

Chesapeake Bay Day 2011...



Tonging for oysters



Tying square-knots to Make a Friendship Bracelet



Mathews Civil War artifacts...



Learning about steam boat travel...

Model Boat Building...



Builders assembling their boats



Builders display their finished boats...

Keeping the Past in the Present Preserving it for the Future

4-H/MMF Boat Building project...

Members of Piankatank Ruritans standing by boat they sponsored for this project...



Front Left to right they are: Harry Johnson, Wayne Turner, Dick Sherill, Richard Forrest, Paul Jones, John York, Clint Bowles, Charlie Darnell; Back row L to R are Wilber Burroughs, Terry Hern, OJ Cole, Carl DelRosso, Jack Ward, Milton Hugate

Pictured below are members of the Mathews Yacht Club who built the boat that the Club sponsored.



Left to right are : Richard Browder, Tim Scheid, John Caperton, Bob Warren (seated), Mory Wood, Hunt Thompson and Dave Montgomery. Not shown are Dan Desmond, Paul Vanden Bout, Wayne Turner, Ted Kranz.

Peggy Restoration progress...



Here is a summarized statement of the Foundations Activities for the year 2011. It is presented here to give you a picture of our financial position and well being.

The Foundation continues to support its mission to preserve and protect Mathews County’s rich maritime and cultural heritage through research, conservation, documentation and education.

Our monthly lecture series, Chesapeake Bay Days, Mathews Maritime Heritage Day, kids Kayak Camp, MMF/4-H Boat Building, and model boat building all are the focus of our mission.

Statement of Activities

Revenue

Contributions	\$17,903.
Grants	6,214.
Boat Donor Program	16,972.
Gwynn’s Island Boat Shop	4,030.
Gift Shop	3,068.
Membership Dues	2,425.
Special Events	<u>274.</u>
Total	\$50,886.

Expenses

Educational Programs	\$2,972.
Boat Donor Program	4,504.
Peggy Operations	9,714.
Peggy Restoration	31,769.
Membership Development	184.
Museum Operations	17,423.
Museum Renovations	<u>6,450.</u>
Total	\$72,476.

Change in Net Assets (\$21,590.)

Volunteers, We thank you...

Volunteers play an important role in our successes. You lighten our load and make it possible for us to provide many programs and activities for the benefit of the citizens of Mathews County.

Our thanks to: Stan and Mary Ellen Cath for providing refreshments at our speaker meetings; and to Janet Loyd, Dave Montgomery, Dave Machen, and Marcy Benouameur for their work on the Maritime Heritage Trail.

Also thanks go to: Millie Montgomery for maintaining our membership data base and e-mailing of meeting announcements and also to our Museum renovation crew of volunteer labor that included: Michael Swiderski, Project Leader; Jack Caldwell, Architect; Dennis Gryder, Master Plumber; Dave Machen, Nancy Lindgren, Dennis Crawford, Stan Cath, Marcy Benouameur, Dave Mortimer, Hank Furniss, Bud Mathews, Pete Hall, Nancy Roche, and Paul Vanden Bout. Job well done!!!

I know there are some volunteers we may have missed thanking. Please accept our sincere apology for the omission and know that we do appreciate your volunteer effort and thank you for it.

For those of you reading this who would like to volunteer to work with us on any of the programs we have going we welcome your call. Contact the Museum at 804-725-4444 and leave your name and contact number. Or you can e-mail us at <info@mathewsmaritime.com>. Either way we’ll get back to you.